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ABSTRACT

An evaluation addressed how existing services in England, especially the ConneXions career guidance service, reach or overlook groups of young people at the margins--those from minority ethnic groups who experience social exclusion and disaffection. Material from 2 sets of indepth interviews with 64 young people (most 16 and 17 years old) in 2 fieldwork sites was analyzed. Findings indicated nearly half of the sample had been subject to exclusion from school of some form; fairly systematic truancy was the norm; for almost half, disaffection began long before they left school, often provoked by traumatic events at home; young people who are NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) are potential problems for the system; young people within the public care system experience additional difficulties, including racism; young people live on the margins of society after they leave school and are often unknown to official agencies; and official agencies were often profoundly disempowering. The potential benefit of the ConneXions strategy (use of personal advisors, mentors, and befrienders for youth) was questioned because of what the authors consider to be as yet unanswered questions about that strategy, including these: (1) who is likely to be most effective in the advisor, mentor, and befriender roles? and (2) how will ConneXions be forged among agencies that now report great difficulty working together. (Appendixes include 62 references and additional research materials.) (YLB)

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